

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-11 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 L-03 NSC-07

PA-04 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAJ-01 NIC-01 OMB-01

DRC-01 /123 W

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R 010719Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9530

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY LONDON

-AMEMBASSY PARIS 1841

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 3324

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT RO

SUBJ: SCINTEIA BRIDLES AT RUMORS OF ROMANIAN INDUSTRIAL
ACCIDENTS

REF: A) BUCHAREST 3113, B) BUCHAREST 2469, (C) BUCHAREST 2387,
D) BUCHAREST A-160

1. "NOTE" ON BACK PAGE SCINTEIA JULY 31 ENTITLED "WHO
GAINS BY SUCH INTERPRETATIONS" TAKES LONDON "DAILY MAIL"
AND "DAILY EXPRESS" TO TASK FOR THEIR REPORTS ON RECENT
SERIES OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS IN ROMANIA. WHILE ADMIT-
TING THAT "REAL FACTS" LIE BEHIND "DISTORTIONS," SCINTEIA
ARGUES THAT ACCIDENTS CAN HAPPEN EVEN IN HIGHLY DEVELOPED
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INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES OWING "GENERALLY" TO NEGLIGENCE,

AND THAT "TENDENTIOUS INTERPRETATIONS" OF BRITISH PAPERS -- WHICH SCINTEIA ALLEGES MEAN TO "DISCREDIT" GOR POLICY TOWARD NATIONAL MINORITIES AND "DEFORM" GOR'S RELATIONS WITH SOVIET UNION AND "OTHER" SOCIALIST COUNTRIES -- ARE OUT OF KEEPING WITH PREVAILING DETENTE ERA. "NOTE" ADDS THAT WORKERS OF ALL MINORITIES, "MAGYARS, GERMANS AND OTHERS," RALLIED TO CONTAIN MISHAPS AND TO PROTECT THEIR "COMMON WELL BEING."

2. (COMMENT. THIS IS FIRST ROMANIAN PUBLIC NOTICE OR ADMISSION OF ACCIDENTS, AROUND WHICH RUMORS HERE HAVE BOILED, ESPECIALLY IN PERIOD SINCE EASTER SUNDAY EXPLOSION IN PITESTI OIL REFINERY). THAT GOR HAS EVIDENTLY SEIZED ON REPLAY OF SOME OF MORE SENSATIONAL TALES IN BRITISH TABLOIDS TO QUASH RUMORS IS MEASURE OF THEIR WIDE CIRCULATION AND GOR SENSITIVITIES. SCINTEIA "NOTE" IS HIGHLY UNUSUAL; ROMANIAN PRESS ALMOST NEVER REACTS TO FOREIGN SPECULATION ON INTERNAL ISSUES. IN LIGHT ON TVOA REPORT EVENING JULY 30 THAT PRAVDA HAD PUBLISHED A STORY CRITICIZING REPORTS FROM BUCHAREST ALLEGING SOVIET RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACCIDENTS, WE WONDER IF PART OF EXPLANATION FOR ARTICLE'S APPEARANCE MAY BE GOR FEAR THAT RUMORS THAT GOR IS TRYING TO PIN BLAME FOR INDUSTRIAL MISHAPS ON USSR SKULDUGGERY ARE GETTING OUT OF HAND AND THREATEN TO SERIOUSLY ANNOY RUSSIANS, OR PERHAPS SOVIETS HAVE ALREADY EXPRESSED ANNOYANCE AND EXERTED PRESSURE ON GOR TO CORRECT SITUATION. (WE HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED PERTINENT COPY OF PRAVDA OURSELVES.) OUR ASSESSMENT TO DATE IS THAT WORKER DISCONTENT MAY WELL HAVE BEEN A FACTOR IN BRASOV TRUCK PLANT FIRE BUT OTHER CAUSES, INCLUDING NEGLIGENCE, POOR SUPERVISION AND TRAINING, AND EQUIPMENT FAILURE HAVE BEEN BEHIND MOST OTHERS. CLEARLY CONCERNED, GOR HAS INSTITUTED STIFF PLANT SECURITY MEASURES AND HAS REPORTEDLY TAKEN PRECAUTIONARY CLOSER LOOK AT WORKER CONDITIONS AS RESULT BRASOV INCIDENT.
BARNES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: OCCUPATIONAL ACCIDENTS, BUILDING DAMAGE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 AUG 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BUCHAR03324
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740209-1183
From: BUCHAREST
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740883/aaaactnj.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A) BUCHAREST 3113, B) BUCHAREST 2469, , (C) BUCHAREST 2387
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <27 JUN 2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SCINTEIA BRIDLES AT RUMORS OF ROMANIAN INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS
TAGS: PINT, RO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005